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## PANDARUS QUOTES OVID IN GEOFFREY CHAUCER'S BOOK ONE OF *TROILUS AND CRISEYDE*

ABSTRACT. Bobrowski, Antoni, Pandarus Quotes Ovid in Geoffrey Chaucer's Book One of *Troilus and Criseyde* (*Pandarus cytuję Owidiusza w pierwszej księdze „Troilusa i Criseydy” Geoffreya Chaucera*).

The medieval epic poem *Troilus and Criseyde* by Chaucer describes the history of unhappy love with the Trojan War in the background. The story is constructed in the convention of courtly love, and the author draws abundantly from a range of plot motifs preserved in the ancient literary tradition. The article discusses the way of intertextual use of Ovid's *Heroides* 5 in the course of events told in Book One of the poem.

Keywords: Ovid; *Heroides*; Geoffrey Chaucer; Troilus; Troy.

The name of Geoffrey Chaucer (ca. 1343–1400), who is regarded as the father of English literature written in the vernacular,<sup>1</sup> is associated, above all, with *Canterbury Tales*, his most important and best-known literary achievement. It has been repeatedly noted, however, that in Chaucer's abundant literary legacy it is not *Canterbury Tales* but another work that is considered to be completed and refined in terms of artistic expression,<sup>2</sup> namely, the extensive, composed in five books, and written in rhyme royal epic poem *Troilus and Criseyde*, which is a fictional transformation of a story derived from the narrative complex of ancient Trojan stories.

In Chaucer's poem, the events of the Trojan War only set the background for telling the history of love of the title characters. At the beginning of Book One, the narrator informs the reader (adding that these are well-known facts: “It is wel wist

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<sup>1</sup> Butterfield 2004: 20.

<sup>2</sup> Windeatt 2004: 214: “While *Troilus and Criseyde* is Chaucer's greatest single completed work and his most fully achieved and accomplished literary structure, the nature and extent of completedness in the *Canterbury Tales* is uncertain, and poses special problems in analysis”; cf. Nolan 1992: 216.

– It is well known”<sup>3</sup>) that the siege of Troy by the Greeks, which was caused by the abduction of Helen by Paris, has been going on for ten years (1.57–63). Chaucer declares, however, that he does not aim to tell a story of the military combat and the fall of Troy. Those events were extensively reported by Homer, Dares and Dictys: “But the Troyane gestes, as they felle, / In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dyte, / Whoso that can, may rede hem as they wryte” – “But the Trojan exploits as they fell / out, in Homer, Dares, or Dictys, might / whosoever read them, as they write” (1.145–148). There is no doubt that “Omer” cannot mean the original text of the *Iliad*, which was not a popular reading in Western Europe throughout the Middle Ages due to the decline in the command of ancient Greek then. Before Greek Homer spoke again to the European readers, the interest in the Trojan themes was satisfied with texts in Latin. They included, apart from the ancient summary of the *Iliad* (*Ilias Latina*) and the works of Roman poets (mainly Virgil and Ovid), two texts created in antiquity and preserved in the Latin language version: *De excidio Troiae historia* by Dares Phrygius and *Ephemeris belli Troiani* by Dictys Cretensis. The works of these two authors, stylized as historiographic but different in many plot details from the traditional story of Homer and the poets of the Epic Cycle, enjoyed great popularity with readers in the Middle Ages. Their authors were then recognized as undisputed experts in the Trojan themes.

The motif of Troilus’s unhappy love, which did not appear earlier in Dares and Dictys, was clearly outlined in the *Roman de Troie*, a poem in 30 books written by Benoît de Sainte-Maure (ca. 1160).<sup>4</sup> Giovanni Boccaccio writing his poem *Il Filostrato* (1335) borrowed this motif from Benoît and made it the main theme of his own work.<sup>5</sup> It is already noticeable in the title, the meaning of which according to the combined Greek-Latin etymology could read “the one overcome by love.”<sup>6</sup> Boccaccio’s poem became the direct basis for the story created by Chaucer,<sup>7</sup> who evidently adopted the Italian author’s concept of basing the course of action on three main characters: the title characters of Troilus and Criseyde (Boccaccio’s Troilo and Criseida), and Pandarus acting as an experienced advisor and intermediary.

The reduction of the Trojan War into the background of a story is also due to the fact that it is difficult to think about direct Homeric or even ancient prototypes of Chaucer’s main characters. Although Homer’s Troilus was set in

<sup>3</sup>Fragments of Chaucer’s text are given in double reading: the original Middle English (according to W.W. Skeat’s edition) and in the modernized version (according to the transcription by A. S. Kline).

<sup>4</sup>Nolan 1992: 14–47.

<sup>5</sup>Nolan 1992: 119–154.

<sup>6</sup>Nolan 1992: 132.

<sup>7</sup>It remains an open question whether Chaucer, in spite of his trips to Italy and his good knowledge of the work of Italian writers and poets, mastered the language well enough to read Boccaccio’s original text directly; it is possible that he used a French translation: Hanly 2002: 159.

a similar genealogical context, i.e. he was Priam's courageous son and Hector and Paris' brother, he was at the same time a completely marginal character in the *Iliad*.<sup>8</sup> Unlike Chaucer's poem, where he is made the focal character of the plot: a young, proud warrior who values bravery and despises emotions, which exposes him to a punishment inflicted by the deity of love. The man falls into love snares and after a short period of serene happiness, betrayed by his beloved girl, he falls into the abyss of suffering and despair. The character of Criseyde is a kind of literary hybrid: her name is a transformation of Chryseis, the daughter of priest Chryses and Agamemnon's captive woman, who was mentioned by Homer in Book One of the *Iliad*.<sup>9</sup> Here, however, the Homeric traces end as in Chaucer's poem, as earlier in Benoît de Sainte-Maure, Guido delle Colonne and Boccaccio,<sup>10</sup> young and beautiful Criseyde is not a captive, but the daughter of the Trojan priest Calchas, who chooses to defect to the Greek invaders' side. His daughter, fully aware of her father's betrayal, lives quietly to avoid anger of fellow citizens. Loved by Troilus, she reciprocates the feeling, which turns out not strong enough and resistant to adversity to survive the separation from her lover, caused by external circumstances. In Homer's story Pandarus is one of the commanders of the forces allied with Troy and the holder of a bow he received from Apollo (*Il.* 2.824–827). In Book Four of the *Iliad* he marks his presence in a very distinct way when, persuaded by Athena, he hurts Menelaus with an arrow and saves Paris from death (*Il.* 4.86–147), thus breaking the previously established rules of duelling between Menelaus and Paris. In Book Five, Pandarus will hurt Diomedes in a battle, and he will eventually die at his hands (*Il.* 5. 95–120; 166–296).<sup>11</sup> Therefore, Homeric Pandarus has nothing in common, except the name, with Pandarus whom Chaucer shows as a stable citizen of Troy and related to Criseyde (he refers to her as a niece, and she greets

<sup>8</sup> Hom. *Il.* 24.252–260: Priam, preparing for the expedition to collect Hector's dead body, says bitterly that he has already lost all the "best" sons (including Troilus). Troilus is equally rarely mentioned in other ancient literary works: Virgil devotes a short passage to him, in which he mentions the tragic death of a young warrior (defined as *infelix puer*) on the battlefield at Troy (*Aen.* 1.474–478); Dictys says in a laconic passage that Troilus *in primis pueritiae annis* was killed most cruelly on the instructions of Achilles (*Eph.* 4.9); Dares devotes more attention to Troilus, not only describing his appearance (*Troilum magnum pulcherrimum pro aetate valentem fortem cupidum virtutis*, 12), but also describing his brave achievements in clashes at the walls of Troy (29; 31–32); but Troilus' love is not mentioned in Dares' work either.

<sup>9</sup> The figure of Chryseis presented in such a way appears also in Dictys, but she is called by her own name –Astynome: *Eph.* II 17; 19; 28; 33; 47.

<sup>10</sup> Some evolution can be observed in the variants of Calchas' daughter's name: Criseyde in *Roman de Troie* is named *Grezeis*, in Boccaccio *Criseida*, while Guido delle Colonne called her *Briseyda*, by the name of another, a better-known captive girl from the *Iliad*. Shakespeare will name Troilus's lover *Cressida* in his version written over two hundred years after Chaucer.

<sup>11</sup> Pandarus is also referred to as a Trojan ally by Dictys (2.35) and Dares (17). Moreover, Dictys informs briefly that Pandarus wounded Menelaus (but there is no mention that he was encouraged to do so by Athena) and got killed by Diomedes (2.40–41).

him with the words: “‘Ey, uncle myn, welcome y-wis,’ quod she” – “‘Ah, my uncle, welcome indeed,’ said she”, 2.87). Pandarus is in relation with Troilus a counsellor experienced in love affairs, who supports a younger friend and volunteers to act as an intermediary facilitating the contact between the lovers, patronizing, as it were, the affair of Troilus and Criseyde from beginning to end.

The course of events is reported in five books of the poem, the starting point being a concise outline of the situation at the walls of the besieged for a decade Troy. In Book One, Troilus, who has a disrespectful attitude to love as such, falls in love at first sight with Criseyde during a ceremony held in a temple. He returns home and hides his love-sickness and suffering for some time. Pressed repeatedly by Pandarus, the young man eventually confesses his secret and is promised help by his friend. In the next two books, Pandarus acts as an intermediary and finally makes it possible for Troilus and Criseyde to spend their first love night; the secret romance gives the lovers ultimate and true happiness. In Book Four, as a result of a series of events, Criseyde has to leave Troy to join her father in the Greek camp. The lovers promise each other faithfulness and love against all adversity, but in Book Five a prominent Greek warrior quickly wins the heart of Criseyde who forgets about the oaths she made, and, heartbroken, Troilus finally understands that she will never come back to him.

The story of Troilus and Criseyde was created in the convention of medieval courtly love,<sup>12</sup> which was based on the idealization of a beloved woman, to whom a man vowed boundless affection, devotion, and willingness to serve the lady of his heart and take all hardships in the hope of winning her favour, even if it was to mean only a vague smile or just a favourable look. Chaucer’s specific projection of the medieval notions on the literary version of the Trojan War inherited from antiquity made the fictional elements of the Homeric world become a kind of conventional decoration in the poem. The characters who bear the names of the personages from the *Iliad* live their dramatic lives against this kind of background, but their mentality and customs are inherently medieval.

The numerous references to the specific works of ancient literature, sometimes made directly and sometimes through indirect allusions and intertextual parallels, belong to the elements creating this ancient staffage. Chaucer’s impressive literary erudition enables him to creatively use the legacy of ancient authors, whose example he himself follows at the end of the poem, when he bids farewell to his “little book” (“Go, litel book,” 5.1786) and expresses his proud hope that it deserves a meeting with the heritage of the old masters:<sup>13</sup>

But litel book, no making thou nenvye,  
But subgit be to alle poesy;  
And kis the steppes, wher-as thou seest pace

<sup>12</sup> Extensive discussion on the concept of courtly love in Lewis 1936: 1–43.

<sup>13</sup> Wallace 2004: 48; cf. also Eckhardt 2002: 191–192.

Virgile, Ovyde, Omer, Lucan, and Stace.  
 (But, little book, do not go in envy,  
 but be subject to all poesy:  
 and kiss the steps where you see pace  
 Virgil, Ovid, Homer, Lucan and Stace). (5. 1789–1792)

Ovid, who is a member of this noble group, provided Chaucer with a small example that can be found in Book One of the poem. When Troilus, consumed by passion, avoids company and chooses to suffer in solitude, he is visited by Pandarus who shows his concern and is eager to find out what misfortune has befallen his friend. Their long conversation scene lasts almost until the end of this book (1.547–1064) and it is only in the last few stanzas that the reader learns that having confessed his secret Troilus feels relieved and Pandarus's offer to give him a helping hand in winning Criseyde's heart almost instantly revives the youth's energy and joy of life, although he has spent many days suffering in loneliness. However, he might have been spent not so many days after all, as the text suggests with considerable precision that the violent love for Criseyde overruns Troilus during a celebration held in April ("whan comen was the tyme of Aperil" – "when there came the time of April", 1.155–156), and it is said that Pandarus begins his supportive activity for his friend the following day, on a May morning ("on Mayes day the thridde" – "on May's day the third", 2.56). Anyway, at the end of Book One Troilus does not return to bed but goes to the battlefield, where he arouses admiration with his bravery and courage.

Before this happens, however, we observe Pandarus' laborious efforts to explore his friend's secret. Troilus confesses relatively quickly that his suffering is caused by love. It takes him 60 lines to reveal it, and he does it with some embarrassment as he has to admit that he has been overcome by a feeling which he previously ridiculed in other people (1. 603–606). His message meets with full understanding, but Pandarus wants to know more to be able to show his support in a greater scope than just hearing the laments. He needs to know more details, and Troilus strongly refuses to give them (1.610–616). Eventually, Troilus names his beloved (1.874), which in turn makes Pandarus feel much relieved. Firstly, it is because it turns out that the object of Troilus' affection is certainly a lady deserving of love. Secondly, because a detailed action plan to make Troilus's desires come true is born in his head, and the plan is immediately put into practice.

The text preceding the revelation of the name of Criseyde, spanning more than 250 lines, is nothing but urging Troilus to accept advice and support from the friend who is experienced in matters of love. During this argument, Pandarus quite unexpectedly mentions a certain letter:

'I woot wel that it fareth thus by me  
 As to thy brother Parys an herdese,  
 Which that y-cleped was Oenone,

Wrot in a compleynt of hir hevynesse  
 Ye say the lettre that she wroot, y gesse?’  
 ‘Nay, never yet, y-wis,’ quod Troilus.  
 (‘I know well that it is with me  
 as when, to your brother Paris, a shepherdess  
 who was named Oenone,  
 wrote in complaining of her wretchedness.  
 You saw the letter that she wrote, I guess.’  
 ‘No, never yet, indeed,’ said Troilus). (1.652–567)

Taking into consideration the logic of the conversation, it should be presumed that Pandarus asks Troilus whether he is familiar with a letter full of complaints, which shepherdess Oenone has written to his brother Paris. This scene marks a clear intertextual reference to Oenone’s poetic letter to Paris from Ovid’s *Heroides*. Naturally, the name of Ovid is not mentioned here, and it would be abusive to formulate a paradoxical conclusion that the Trojan prince’s knowledge of the work of the Roman poet from the Augustan age is being checked here. However, it does not change the fact that Pandarus behaves for a moment like a teacher who is questioning a student about his school reading. Troilus’ prompt denial should be treated not so much as an answer of a student embarrassed by his ignorance, but as an expression of curiosity and looking forward to hearing further details about the said letter. So, Pandarus continues: Oenone wrote that although Apollo was an expert in medical art and was able to cure all illnesses, he did not have the remedy for love afflictions he experienced himself when he was unlucky in love with Admetus’s daughter:

Yet to him-self his conninge was ful bare;  
 For love hadde him so bounden in a snare,  
 Al for the doughter of the kinge Admete,  
 That al his craft ne coude his sorwe bete  
 (yet to himself his cunning was impaired:  
 for love had him so bound in a snare,  
 all for the daughter of the King Admete,  
 that all his craft could not his sorrow beat). (1.662–665)

Indeed, Ovid’s *Heroides* 5 contains the wording used by Chaucer in his reference. The poem is part of a collection of fictional poetic letters written by mythological women who long for their spouses or lovers, from whom they have been separated for various reasons. Nymph Oenone was the first life companion of Paris of Troy. He became involved with her when he was still a shepherd and did not know his royal origin; later, Paris abandoned her for Helen. The nymph is not a figure that would be often mentioned in the literary tradition. Besides Ovid, it was only Quintus of Smyrna who devoted more attention to her in his poem (*Posthom.* 10.259–489). She appeared primarily in ancient mythographic works. In Apollod. 3.12.6 we read that she had the gift of clairvoyance and healing

abilities; when abandoned by Paris, she initially refused to help him when he was fatally wounded; after his death, however, she committed suicide. A similar story can be seen in Parthenius (*Erot. path.* 4) and in a somewhat reduced form in Dictys (4.21).<sup>14</sup> It appears from Ovid's *Heroides* 5 that Oenone wrote her letter when Paris was already in a relationship with Helen, who was already in Troy. But there is not yet a clear perspective of the destruction of the city. The letter is long, written – like all poems from this collection – in a very emotional tone, with the arguments characterized by rapid mood changes that oscillate between loftiness and servility, tenderness and irony, and a provocative tone which intertwines with desperate pleas. Oenone insists on several occasions that it was her, not Helen, who is connected with Paris with the real marital bonds,<sup>15</sup> and she speaks about her rival with contempt and disgust (*turpis amica*, v. 70), indicating that Helen is a woman who showed by her behaviour that she cannot be faithful to a man. Recalling the previous moments of their common happiness, she begs Paris to come back to her. In the end, she claims she is constant in her feelings, although she arouses desire among satyrs and other inhabitants of the forest, where she lives as a nymph. Even Apollo himself, who once took her virginity by force (v. 133–144) and gave her the ability to heal diseases as compensation for this, could not resist her beauty: “Ipse ratus dignam medicas mihi tradidit artes / admisitque meas ad sua dona manus” (v. 145–146).

In his conversation with Troilus, Pandarus limits the extensive content of the information about Oenone's complaints in order to dwell on a matter much more significant to him, which Oenone writes about in Ovid's poem in the following way:

Quaecumque herba potens ad opem radixque medenti  
 utilis in toto nascitur orbe, mea est.  
 Me miseram, quod amor non est medicabilis herbis!  
 deficior prudens artis ab arte mea.  
 Ipse repertor opis vaccas pavisse Phraeas  
 fertur et e nostro saucius igne fuit (*Her.* 5.147–152)

Apollo's gift made it possible for the nymph to find a remedy for every illness except love. Here the medical art fails as proven by the example of the god himself, who is described here as a *repertor opis*, who “herded cattle in Phrae” and suffered from love, as Oenone did.<sup>16</sup> These words refer to the passage informing

<sup>14</sup>More comprehensive discussion about the sources is provided by Jacobson 1974: 176–177, as well as Knox in his 1995 edition (see bibliography: Ovid. *Heroides. Select Epistles*, 1995: 140–141), cf. Fumo 2003: 285.

<sup>15</sup>The relationship between Oenone and Paris was defined as marriage also in Apollodorus, where we read that Andromache became the wife of Hector, and Oenone the wife of Paris.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. Knox's commentary (see bibliography: Ovid. *Heroides. Select Epistles*, 1995: 168–169), which indicates the difficulties of interpretation and raises stylistic reservations to the



about Apollo's service to Admetus, king of Pherae in Thessaly. According to the oldest known literary messages, slave service as a shepherd was meant to punish the god for killing the Cyclopes and this information is also found in the texts of later ancient mythographers and erudite scholars,<sup>17</sup> but none of them mentions the erotic motivation of this servitude.<sup>18</sup> The suggestion of Apollo's love for Admetus, however, appeared in Alexandrian poetry, which is mentioned by Callimachus in his *Hymn to Apollo*: Φοῖβον καὶ Νόμιον κυκλήσκομεν ἐξέτι κείνου, / ἐξότ' ἐπ' Ἀμφρυσσῶ ζευγίτιδας ἔτρεφεν ἵππους / ἡθέου ὑπ' ἔρωτι κεκαυμένος Ἀδμήτοιο ("Phoebus and Nomius we call him, ever since the time when by Amphrysus he tended the yoke-mares, fired with love of young Admetus", 47–49).<sup>19</sup> In the episode mentioned in the hymn, Apollo takes pains to serve Admetus in the name of love, not to redeem himself.<sup>20</sup> Such a presentation of the relationship between Apollo and Admetus became close to the Roman elegiac poets because it was consistent with the concept of *servitium amoris*<sup>21</sup> developed by them, which assumed unconditional submission and obedience to the inaccessible, capricious, and sometimes cruel *domina*. Following this concept, a poet becomes a slave of Cynthia in Propertius, and a slave of Delia and Nemesis in Tibullus. The most elaborate poetic development of the motif of Apollo's service to Admetus can be found in Tibullus' elegy 2.3 (v. 11–32),<sup>22</sup> where it was used as an example of the boundless devotion of a lover and his readiness for all sacrifices:

Pavit et Admeti tauros formosus Apollo,  
nec cithara intonsae profueruntve comae,  
nec potuit curas sanare salubribus herbis:  
quidquid erat medicae vicerat artis amor (Tib. 2.3.11–14)

In the elegiac approach, neither Apollo's musical talent nor his beauty, or the knowledge of medical art could win Admetus' affection. The latter was of no use ("nec potuit sanare curas") as no healing herbs could relieve suffering in love. Apollo, therefore, took up the hard work of herding cattle, which resulted in his neglect of appearance and a loss of the divine skills of a singer and clairvoyant: the roar of the cattle now interrupted his song, and the oracles whose patron he was, ceased to foretell the future (v. 19–22).

above-mentioned v. 151–152, noting that this couplet could have been included in the poem as a result of interpolation.

<sup>17</sup> Apollod. 1.9.15 and 3.10.4; Hyg. 49 and 50; Serv. *In Aen.* 6.398 and 7.761.

<sup>18</sup> Solimano 1970: 256–257; Foulon 1980: 254–256.

<sup>19</sup> Transl. by A. W. Mair in the Loeb edition. T. K. Hubbard (2013: 88) is inclined to recognize that this kind of "romanticizing interpretation" is of a provenance that precedes the Hellenistic period.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. detailed discussion on the Admetus episode in Cheschire 2005: 332–335.

<sup>21</sup> Copley 1947: 286–287; Lyne 1979: 118.

<sup>22</sup> Foulon 1980; Whitaker 1983: 79–86; cf. commentary by Murgatroyd 1994: 90–92.



"Enone ha una conoscenza precisa del testo tibulliano", said Sergio Casali, and if we accept his interpretation based on the intertextual way of reading Ovid's *Heroides* 5,<sup>23</sup> it should be stated that not only does Oenone know Tibullus' elegy and the Callimachean version very well, but she can also make a right selection of elements that will create her own narration. She focused on displaying the basic analogy between herself and the figure of the god. She is, like Apollo, an expert in the medical art (she received this knowledge from Apollo), but she is incapable of helping herself because there is no cure for her (and Apollo's) illness ("amor non est medicabilis herbis"; *Her.* 5.149).

Telling Troilus about Oenone's letter to Paris, Pandarus in Chaucer's poem is also very careful in selecting information that is to help him encourage Troilus to make more extensive confessions regarding the love by which the young man was overtaken. Having learned that Troilus has not read the letter, he could freely omit the content that he regarded as insignificant at the moment – that is, in fact, a vast majority of the desperate nymph's long reasoning – and speak extensively only about Oenone's marginal account of Apollo's suffering in love and the helplessness of the god who was unable to cure himself (1.559–665). Of course, it must be noticed here that the relation of Pandarus compared to the relevant passage of Ovid's text shows some difference. Pandarus reports that it is the daughter of Admetus ("the doughter of the kinge Admete", 1.664), not Admetus himself, who is the object of Apollo's love. This issue could be explained not so much by Chaucer's inventiveness as by the fact that, as previous studies have shown, working on his poem, he reached to not only the original text of Ovid but also to Filippo Ceffi's translation of *Heroides* into Italian. This translation contains such an interpolation, which was taken probably from earlier medieval glosses,<sup>24</sup> and the inclusion of a supplementary mention of the daughter of Admetus in Ovid's text could have been easier because only Apollo's pastoral service in Phrae is mentioned *expressis verbis* in the Latin version (*Her.* 5.151–152).

Pandarus tells Troilus about Apollo's love affliction, only to add in the next sentence that he himself is somewhat in a similar situation:

Right so fare I, unhappily for me;  
 I love oon best, and that me smerteth sore;  
 And yet, paraunter, can I rede thee,  
 And not my-self; reprove me no more.  
 (Right so, I am, unhappily for me:  
 I love one best, and that afflicts me sore.  
 And yet perhaps I can give aid to thee,  
 if not myself: reproach me no more) (1. 666–669)

<sup>23</sup> Casali 1992: 91–92.

<sup>24</sup> Meech 1930: 110–113; Fumo 2003: 289–290.

The reader of the poem, unlike Pandarus who finally manages to persuade Troilus to confess the secret, will never know the name of Pandarus's lady. But here and in a few other places in the text,<sup>25</sup> it is clear that Troilus's older friend is learning about lovesickness from his own experience. Pandarus tells Troilus directly that he is unlucky in love and, like Apollo mentioned by Oenone, he is unable to help himself. Despite this, however, he offers to help the young man. This way, he draws a kind of parallel which is limited only to stating the current similarity between himself and the mentioned god. In the long term, it appears that there are remedies that Apollo does not have at his disposal, such as wise advice and practical support from a loyal and knowledgeable friend. It is difficult to resist the impression that the implied meaning of this reasoning contains the intriguing suggestion that Apollo might have needed such a friend as Pandarus at his side. It seems that such an idea is on Pandarus' mind and he treats the referenced fragment of Oenone's letter as a kind of argument addressed to Troilus.

However, a lot of time and effort is needed before Troilus ultimately reveals the secret of his sweetheart's name. This enables Pandarus to take immediate action, which, as it is known, will bring the desired result, thus confirming Pandarus' belief that although he cannot do anything to help himself, he can help others effectively. Continuing his persuasive argument, Pandarus modifies the tone of his statement a little bit and emphasizes that one should never be ashamed to love. He also assures that he will show unconditional loyalty to his friend even if it were to turn out that Troilus was in burning love which would not be approved of, for example to Helen, his brother's wife:

Ne, by my trouthe, I kepe nat restreyne  
 Thee fro thy love, thogh that it were Eleyne,  
 That is thy brotheres wyf, if ich it wiste;  
 Be what she be, and love hir as thee liste.  
 (No, by my troth, I do not intend  
 to keep you from your love, though it were Helen,  
 who is your brother's wife, if I should know it is.  
 Let her be who she be, and love her as you wish). (1.676–679)

The mention of Helen in this place quite unexpectedly makes the argumentation tinged with ironic ambiguity. As Mary-Jo Arn remarked, confidence in Pandarus' intentions may be weakened if we realize that in this way Troilus is juxtaposed with both Oenone (because he suffers from love) and Paris, who became involved with Helen with no regard to anything and anybody, just because he loved her – but this attitude of his will lead to the

<sup>25</sup> E.g. 1.715–721; 2.57–63.

destruction of Troy one day.<sup>26</sup> Troilus, of course, cannot know this; he does not know either – as Pandarus shared with him only a fragment of Oenone's letter – that the nymph complained in her letter about the betrayal of her husband Paris, who abandoned her for Helen, an immoral and unfaithful woman. Troilus, as "the other Paris", will get involved with Criseyde, who, like Helen, will prove to be incapable of fidelity, and this love relationship will be possible thanks to the help of Pandarus.

Naturally, by urging Troilus in Book One of the poem to confide in him and quoting Ovid,<sup>27</sup> Pandarus did not know yet that the relationship between Troilus and Criseyde, which he strongly supported, would end in a tragic disappointment. However, besides the skill in action and unquestionable talent of an intermediary, he possessed life wisdom that probably comes with age and experience. Thanks to this wisdom, he will have no illusions whatsoever that Criseyde, when put to the test of separation from her lover, will keep her oath of faithfulness. Therefore, when the course of events described in the poem is coming to an end, Pandarus will stand together with Troilus on the walls of Troy to look out for Criseyde, who promised to return from the Greek camp after ten days. But deep inside him, he will think of the famous saying about last year's snows,<sup>28</sup> sure that waiting will be futile.

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<sup>26</sup> Arn 1980: 8; cf. Fumo 2003: 286–288.

<sup>27</sup> As pointed out by Fumo (2003: 282), the reference to Oenone's letter to Paris in the poem does not have analogy in the direct source, i.e. in Boccaccio's *Filostrato*, so it should be considered Chaucer's innovation, one that is all the more significant considering that Oenone was usually overlooked by the medieval mythographers.

<sup>28</sup> "Ye, fare-wel al the snow of feme yere!" – "Yes, farewell all the snows of yester-year" (5.1176).

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PANDARUS CYTUJE OWIDIUSZA W PIERWSZEJ KSIĘDZE *TROILUSA I CRISEYDY*  
GEOFFREYA CHAUCERA

Streszczenie

Zawarta w poemacie Chaucera *Troilus i Criseyda* opowieść skonstruowana została w konwencji średniowiecznej miłości dworskiej z pogłębioną introspekcją psychologiczną w wizerunkach głównych bohaterów. Autor obficie czerpie z repertorium antycznych wątków fabularnych, wpłatając we własną narrację nawiązania do postaci i epizodów przekazanych przez starożytną tradycję literacką. Swobodnie selekcionuje wątki i motywy, dostosowując je do własnych założeń i celów, tworzy swego rodzaju syntezę konwencji literackich, w której miłość dworska, osadzona w specyficznie ukształtowanym fabularnym kontekście „homeryckim”, uzupełniona zostaje

o elementy rzymskiej koncepcji miłości elegijnej wprowadzone do poematu za pomocą odniesień intertekstualnych. Do tego rodzaju odniesień należy bezpośrednie przywołanie miłosnego listu napisanego przez nimfę Ojnone, które pojawia się w toku narracji księgi I, gdy przyjaciel pragnie zaoferować zakochanemu Troilusowi pomoc i radę w miłosnych cierpieniach. Imię Owidiusza tutaj nie pada, jednak krótkie streszczenie treści owego listu nie pozostawia obeznanemu z poezją rzymską czytelnikowi żadnych wątpliwości, iż chodzi o utwór umieszczony na piątej pozycji w Owidiuszowych *Listach heroin*. Artykuł omawia sposób intertekstualnego wykorzystania tego fragmentu w pierwszej księdze poematu Chaucera.